

BEHEMOTH

\* Andreas Trottman sent me the 3/1990 issue of the "swissair Gazette" which contains many interesting articles on dragons and dragon folklore: Helmut Brinker: The Power of Creative Transformation (on Chinese dragons and their place in geomancy and mythology); Robert H. Gassmann: Des dragons qui dansent (on Chinese dragons); Michael Henss: Au pays du Dragon-Tonnere (on Bhutan); Iso Camartin: Die unerlöste Natur (on European dragon tales); Peter Sager: Das Haustier der Waliser Seele (Welsh dragons) and Toni Bürgin: They Really Lived - the Legend and the Facts (on dinosaurs, but mentions the Loch Ness Monster). - Michel Raynal has sent me an article from the "Bulletin Mensual de la Société Linnéenne de Lyon" (1990, 59) which he authored together with Michel Dethier. It deals with recent cryptozoological discoveries: the giant gecko of New Zealand and a strange bird from the Marquesas that the authors claim were predicted by cryptozoology. He identifies the newly discovered giant gecko with the Maori legends and early discoverer's tales about giant lizards in New Zealand. - El País (Madrid), 16. February (p.33) had a report on a newly discovered dinosaur in Spain and points out that palaeontologists today consider birds to be a surviving species of dinosaurs.

## TSTS

• Manila: This strange "woman gives birth to fish"-story from a Manila tabloid is retold in an AP article in the SAUDI GAZETTE (12. April, p.16ab). It shows how careful we should be with monster stories from the Philippines (and there have been many!). "Extra, extra, read all about it: Woman Gives Birth to Fish...Such reports are a staple of Manila's tabloids, among the most widely read of the city's more than 20 dailies. In a country where the truth is often bizarre enough, English and Tagalog language tabloids dish out fantasy and flamboyance for those who find the broadsheet dailies too tame. The latest titillation was the saga of 'Goldfish Flores Pascua', a 15-C [cm?] long mudfish supposedly 'born' to Lilian Pascua, 22, of Paniqui in Tarlac province. Several Manila tabloids reported that Mrs Pascua gave birth to the fish on March 31 and named it 'Goldfish'.

...later basin, ... on their front pages. For several days, tabloids revealed their readers with details of the couple's plans to name the fish on an auspicious day, despite healthy scepticism by local officials. 'I think a fish should not be registered because it doesn't even have the resemblance of a man', said Paniqui Mayor Cesar Cuchapin. The controversy was resolved when tabloids reported last week that 'Goldfish's' short but celebrated life had come to an end. It was eaten by the family dog!" The story was printed in the tabloid "Ang Pilipino Ngayon", which also carried stories about an 8-year-old boy giving birth to a foetus, and a teen-aged girl who became pregnant by the spirit of a 19th century bishop. But the report shows how active the belief in inter-breeding between man and fish, which is a part of the mermaid myth, must still be in some parts of the world. For more news from the Philippines, see KRAKEN.

- London: The British Museum exhibition "Fake? The Art of Deception" shows "the diminutive remains of 'Mer-men', cobbled up from remains of fish and monkeys". (The Times, 10. March, p.43)

- Another "lizard man" from the movies: On March 10, German TV (ARD) screened "The Reptile" (UK 1966, directed by John Gilling) which features a woman who transforms into a snake. It is one of these B-movies you are supposed to like, but which are actually extremely boring.

#### LEVIATHAN

- In his Newsletter (49, March 1990) J.J. Barloy mentions a "white shark in South Africa, more than 9 metres long, in July 1989).
- Tauchen (July 1989) had an article on "monsters of the deep" which I haven't seen yet.

#### KRAKEN

- Philippines: This one comes from the Sun (London), Dec 27, 1989, p. 5 (credit: Michel Raynal): "Octopus kills tot - An octopus the size of a cow overturned an 18ft-long boat, killing a baby, it was claimed. Fishermen found 14 survivors after the motorised canoe sank, but a two-week-old boy drowned. The tot's dad, Alfredo Caballero, said the giant octopus grabbed the craft's outriggers off the Philippines."

#### USO

- Sweden: On Feb 28, the Swedish Navy fired underwater grenades at a USO south of Stockholm. Submarine hunters had picked up sonar signals about 35 km from Stockholm. No traces of a damaged ship were found later, according to the Defense Ministry. Within half a week, the Navy opened fire on USOs three times - with the usual results. (International Herald Tribune, 1 March, p.2)
- Sunken cities: Cuadernos de Ufologia (Jan 90, p.91) has a short note on the legend of Laguna Tagua-Tagua (Chile). It was bewitched by the devil and has a sunken city on its bottom that can only be seen at St John's Day. Whoever sees it will immediately go blind (story collected by famous folklorist Felix Coluccio). - The Observer, April 4 (Discovery page) had an article on the theory that the early Britons came from islands now only sandbanks under the North Sea, a kind of Celtic Atlantis.

#### CRYPTOZOLOGY

- New discoveries: -Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau (2/ 90,p.71):new species of gecko and maki found in Madagaskar. - Newsweek, April 2, p.48: Bernhard Meier has -once again- discovered a new species of lemur in Madagaskar. - Tauchen (2/90, p.9): Coelacanth filmed.
- Yeti: The French Science magazine "Science & Vie" (nr. 870, March 1990, p.78 - 80) has a long article exposing the famous Shipton picture of a yeti's footprint as a hoax, while in an interview with the "tageszeitung" (Berlin) Italian mountaneer Reinhold Messner confirms that he saw a yeti in Tibet. He believes there are two kinds: a black one (a species of bear) and a red one (a monkey or ape). (April 19,p.14)